

to, result in nothing less than a quasi federal Empire, with the highest authority vested in the Imperial Conference; where in case of difference Great Britain would of necessity, by virtue of her powerful world influence and world interests, be the decisive voice; while in international affairs she would be considered as the only internationally recognised State of the Group.

Let us now consider whether in practice the idea of the Unity of the Group has answered its original purpose, or whether matters followed a different course, as just indicated.

The main objects it was intended to achieve were originally two :-

1. The recognition of the Dominions as independent international States.
2. The assurance of the continued existence of the Empire by united action in Foreign Policy.

What has become of these objects? I think I am not saying too much if I maintain that so far nothing more has been attained along the fresh path than a further obscuring of the Status of the Dominions, and an endangering of any desirable co-operation between the Dominions and Great Britain.

In order to give you an opportunity of judging how far I am right, I may cite in the first place the following:

Firstly concerning our Status :-

We are informed in the Press that in the Portuguese Senate a question was asked on the 4th instant concerning our international Status, as the result of a statement on the subject which I had recently made in Parliament. After a certain Senator had expressed the

opinion /...